

REMARKS

Applicants have amended claims 1, 3, 5, 6, 8-14, 16-21, 28, 29, 32-46, 48, 49, 52, 54-58 and 61 to correct minor errors of form. No new matter has been added as a result of these amendments.

The Office has restricted the claims in this case to four inventions designated as follows:

- Invention I, claims 1-32, drawn to a method for collecting and storing information, classified in class 704, subclass 14;
- Invention II, claims 33-60 and 66-69, drawn to use of the biometric system, classified in class 704, subclass 14;
- Invention III, claim 61, drawn to removing hindrances, classified in class 704, subclass 14; and
- Invention IV, claims 62-65, drawn to encouraging enrollment in a biometric system, classified in class 704, subclass 14.

The Office states that Inventions I and II, Inventions I and III, Inventions I and IV, Inventions II and III, Inventions II and IV and Inventions III and IV are each related as subcombinations disclosed as usable together in a single combination under MPEP §806.05(d). The Office states that the subcombinations are distinct if they do not overlap in scope and are not obvious variants, and if it is shown that at least one subcombination is separately usable. However, even if this were the case, under MPEP §§806.05(d) and 808.02, restriction is only proper when there would be a serious burden if restriction were not required, as evidenced by separate classification, status, or field of search. The Office has not shown that there would be a serious burden in this instance. Indeed, with respect to Inventions I-IV, each Invention is listed in class 704, subclass 14. Any search performed for one Invention is likely to identify references pertinent to the other Inventions as well.

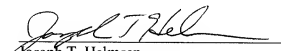
As such, the Office has not established that a serious burden exists and a restriction is improper in this case. However, in order to be compliant with the Restriction Requirement, Applicants have elected, with traverse, Invention II drawn to claims 33-60 and 66-69. Applicants expressly reserve the right to present the claims of Invention I (claims 1-32), Invention III (claim 61), Invention IV (claims 62-65) or other claims, in one or more divisional, continuation or continuation-in-part applications at a later date, if necessary.

Applicants respectfully request that the current application be allowed and passed to issue. If the Examiner believes for any reason that personal communication will expedite prosecution of this application, I invite the Examiner to telephone me directly.

AUTHORIZATION

No fee is believed to be due for this submission. However, the Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any additional fees which may be required for this submission, or credit any overpayment, to deposit account no. 50-0436.

Respectfully submitted,
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